



The Movement:

ANC, Leagues, SANCO, Women

In “[The State and Revolution](#)”, Lenin wrote that democracy, and only democracy, could train people to think together, take decisions together, and act collectively. In the same work, he also wrote that democracy is not freedom. Democracy imposes the will of the majority on the minority and that is not freedom, said Lenin. Democracy is part of the road to freedom, but it is not the last part of that road.

In the South African democratic dispensation there are many more-or-less-democratic institutions. In this and the next two parts of this Induction course, we are going to consider both the autonomous Mass Democratic Movement, including COSATU and the ANC, and also the state’s democracy, national, provincial and local, and including Ward Committees, School Governing Bodies, Community-Police Forums, and other such statutory entities.

In this item, we briefly define, for Induction purposes, the ANC, its Leagues, and SANCO.

African National Congress (ANC)

The ANC is an individual-membership mass organisation. At its 100th anniversary on January 8th 2012 it had one million members. By the beginning of 2013 it had 1.2 million members. Since the 52nd National Congress (Polokwane, 2007) it has approximately doubled in membership.

The African National Congress is the liberation movement that incorporates the class alliance between all of the oppressed classes, including the working class. The African National Congress exists to carry out the National Democratic Revolution. The ANC is also in practice a party within the South African constitution, and it has been the ruling party since the first universal-franchise election in 1994.

The ANC has allies, but it is not a federation. Nor is it part of a federation.

ANC Women's League

The ANC Women's League was founded in 1948, five years after the admission of women into the ANC in 1943. The ANCWL is an ANC section for women and not a women's movement for all women.

ANC Youth League

The ANC Youth League was in difficulty and is now under a National Task Team. The ANC Youth League is part of the ANC and does not have a life apart from the ANC. The Youth League normally has a fully developed structure from branch level up to national.

ANC Veteran's League

The ANC Veteran's League is for people with 40 years of unbroken membership in the ANC. It does not organise old people in general.

[SANCO](#)

SANCO is the National Civic Organisation. A Civic Association is a type of mass organisation that arose organically from South African history. The Civics belong to their members, in the localities, and they are therefore the natural home of the local petty-bourgeoisie, whose environment is always local. SANCO is a full member of the formal National Democratic Revolutionary Alliance.

The Women's Movement

There is no mass-membership national democratic Women's Organisation in South Africa that individual women can belong to, simply as women. The Progressive Women's Movement is, according to its own documents, "not a formal structure". In practice this means that it is not democratic. It has no democratic constitution.

The mass-membership national democratic Women's Organisation remains the missing fifth Alliance partner. It is the necessary component of the NDR that has been neglected.

Please read the attached statement of the ANC National Executive Committee (NEC). It can serve as an example of how the leadership of the movement views the organic structure and relationship between the many parts of the movement.

- The above is to introduce an original reading-text: [ANC NEC Statement following meeting held on the 17 May 2013](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).